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Emotional intelligence and job stress as predictors of work–life balance among married female elementary school teachers

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Abstract

Background: The increasing participation of women in the workforce has led to multiple-role demands, particularly among married female teachers, which may affect their work–life balance. Emotional intelligence and job stress are considered important factors influencing work–life balance.

Purpose: To examine whether emotional intelligence and job stress predict work–life balance among married female elementary school teachers.

Method: This quantitative correlational study involved 106 married female elementary school teachers recruited through convenience sampling. Participants were recruited from elementary schools in Kemiling District, Bandar Lampung, Indonesia. Data were collected using the Work–Life Balance Scale, Emotional Intelligence Scale, and Job Stress Scale. Data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis.

Results: The findings indicated that emotional intelligence and job stress significantly contributed to work–life balance among married female teachers. Emotional intelligence showed a positive contribution, whereas job stress demonstrated a negative contribution to work–life balance.

Conclusion: Higher emotional intelligence and lower job stress were associated with better work–life balance. School-based support and stress-management initiatives may help teachers manage competing work and family responsibilities.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence; Job Stress; Married Female Teachers; Work–Life Balance.

INTRODUCTION

The increasing participation of women in the workforce has become a significant social phenomenon in recent years. According to Statistics Indonesia the labor force participation rate of women continues to increase, indicating greater involvement of women in professional occupations (Arlianto, Qomariah, & Hermawan, 2026). Alongside their professional responsibilities, married women are also expected to fulfill domestic roles within their families. These dual responsibilities may create challenges in balancing work and personal life. Teaching is one of the professions predominantly occupied by women (Abdillah & Rahmat, 2017). Female elementary school teachers are required to perform various

responsibilities, including classroom instruction, lesson planning, student assessment, administrative duties, and professional development activities. For married female teachers, these responsibilities coexist with family obligations, such as childcare and household management. As a result, maintaining work-life balance becomes an important issue among this population. Work-life balance refers to an individual's ability to maintain harmony between work and personal life roles (Gynastiar & Mangundjaya, 2025).

Several factors have been identified as determinants of work-life balance, including individual and occupational factors. Emotional

intelligence represents an important individual factor, while job stress represents an occupational factor that may influence an individual's ability to achieve balance between work and personal life (Ardi, Astuti, & Sulisty, 2017). Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize and manage one's own emotions, motivate oneself, understand the emotions of others, and establish positive interpersonal relationships (Hakim & Rizky, 2021). Individuals with higher emotional intelligence tend to cope more effectively with role conflicts and work demands. Previous studies have reported a positive association between emotional intelligence and work-life balance among working women and educators (Annisa, Wardhani, & Amallia, 2022).

In contrast, job stress may negatively affect work-life balance. Job stress occurs when work demands exceed an individual's capacity to cope (Bello & Tanko, 2020). Excessive workloads, administrative responsibilities, and professional obligations may contribute to stress among teachers. Previous studies have indicated that higher levels of job stress are associated with lower levels of work-life balance. Although previous studies have examined emotional intelligence, job stress, and work-life balance, research focusing specifically on married female elementary school teachers remains limited. Therefore, this study aimed to examine the role of emotional intelligence and job stress in work-life balance among married female elementary school teachers (Hasby, Hendriani, & Indarti, 2017).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional correlational design to examine the associations between emotional intelligence, job stress, and work–life balance among married female elementary school teachers. The study was conducted in elementary schools in Kemiling District, Bandar Lampung City, Indonesia. A total of 106 married female elementary school teachers participated in this study and were recruited using a convenience sampling technique. Eligible participants were married female teachers who were actively teaching in elementary schools in Kemiling District and voluntarily agreed to participate by providing informed consent. Data were collected through self-administered questionnaires consisting of the Work–Life Balance Scale (17 items; Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.83$), the Emotional Intelligence Scale (31 items; Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.913$), and the Job Stress Scale (11 items; Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.759$). All instruments used a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree), with higher scores indicating higher levels of the measured construct.

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26. Prior to hypothesis testing, assumption tests, including normality, linearity, and multicollinearity, were performed. Multiple linear regression analysis was subsequently conducted to examine the contributions of emotional intelligence and job stress to work–life balance among married female elementary school teachers. This study received ethical approval from the Research Ethics Committee of Universitas Malahayati (Ethical Clearance No. 5224/EC/KEP-UNMAL/III/2026). All participants were informed about the objectives of the study and voluntarily agreed to participate by signing informed consent. Participant anonymity and data confidentiality were maintained throughout the research process, and all collected data were used exclusively for research purposes.

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RESEARCH RESULTS**Table 1. Characteristics of the Respondents (N= 106)**

Variable	Results
Age (n/%) (Mean±SD) (Range) (Year)	(41.0 ± 6.7) (25–55)
25–35	21/19.8
36–40	17/16.0
41–45	48/45.3
46–55	20/18.9
Teaching Experience (n/%)	
1–3 years	9/8.5
4–7 years	24/22.6
8–12 years	46/43.4
13–15 years	27/25.5
Length of Marriage (n/%)	
1–5 years	22/20.8
6–10 years	18/17.0
11–15 years	42/39.6
16–20 years	24/22.6
Work-Life Balance (n/%)	
High	26/24.5
Moderate	51/48.1
Low	29/27.4
Emotional Intelligence (n/%)	
High	30/28.3
Moderate	64/60.4
Low	12/11.3
Job Stress (n/%)	
High	18/17.0
Moderate	74/69.8
Low	14/13.2

Table 1 shows that the mean age of the respondents was 41.0 ± 6.7 years, with an age range of 25–55 years. Most participants were aged 41–45 years (48; 45.3%), had 8–12 years of teaching experience (46; 43.4%), and had been married for 11–15 years (42; 39.6%). Regarding the study variables, most respondents had a moderate level of work–life balance (51; 48.1%), moderate emotional intelligence (64; 60.4%), and moderate job stress (74; 69.8%).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of study variables

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Work-Life Balance	27.00	66.00	43.93	10.03
Emotional Intelligence	54.00	120.00	87.33	12.63

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Job Stress	23.00	51.00	38.03	6.10
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Table 2 shows that emotional intelligence had the highest mean score ($M = 87.33$; $SD = 12.63$), followed by work–life balance ($M = 43.93$; $SD = 10.03$) and job stress ($M = 38.03$; $SD = 6.10$).

Table 3. Multiple regression analysis of emotional intelligence and job stress on work–life balance

R	R ²	F	Sig.
0.919	0.844	277.895	<0.001

The results indicated that emotional intelligence and job stress jointly contributed significantly to work–life balance among married female elementary school teachers. The regression model explained 84.4% of the variance in work–life balance.

DISCUSSION

The results showed that emotional intelligence and job stress simultaneously contributed significantly to work–life balance among married female elementary school teachers. Emotional intelligence showed a positive contribution, whereas job stress demonstrated a negative contribution to work–life balance. The coefficient of determination indicated that both variables explained 84.4% of the variance in work–life balance, suggesting that emotional intelligence and job stress play substantial roles in shaping teachers' ability to balance their professional and personal lives. These findings can be explained by the work–home resources model, which proposes that personal resources and work-related demands interact across the work and family domains, thereby influencing individuals' ability to maintain work–life balance (Du, Derks, & Bakker, 2018). This finding supports the assumption that work–life balance is influenced by both internal resources, such as emotional intelligence, and external demands, such as job stress.

The present study demonstrated that emotional intelligence had a positive contribution to work–life balance. This result indicates that teachers with higher levels of emotional intelligence tend to have better abilities to manage the demands arising from both work and family responsibilities (Paraswati, Amelia, & Pujiyanto, 2024). Emotional intelligence encompasses the ability to recognize one's own emotions, regulate emotions, motivate oneself, recognize the emotions of others, and establish positive interpersonal relationships. These

competencies enable individuals to respond more effectively to challenges, role conflicts, and stressful situations encountered in daily life. Married female teachers often experience multiple responsibilities, including teaching, lesson preparation, administrative duties, childcare, and household management. Under such circumstances, emotional intelligence becomes an important personal resource that helps individuals maintain psychological stability and adapt to competing demands. Teachers who are capable of understanding and regulating their emotions are more likely to prevent emotional exhaustion and maintain positive interactions with colleagues, students, and family members, thereby achieving a healthier balance between their professional and personal roles (Tanessa & Halida, 2025).

These findings are consistent with previous studies reporting that emotional intelligence is positively associated with work–life balance (Naz, Ahmad, & Batool, 2021). Individuals with higher emotional intelligence tend to demonstrate greater self-control, resilience, and adaptability, which contribute to their ability to cope with multiple responsibilities (Sari, 2024). Emotional intelligence also facilitates effective interpersonal relationships and adaptive coping strategies, thereby reducing the likelihood of conflicts that interfere with work–life balance. These findings further support previous evidence indicating that personal psychological resources contribute to employees' ability to maintain a healthy balance between work and family life (Irmawati & Kn, 2017).

In contrast, job stress was found to have a negative contribution to work–life balance. This finding suggests that higher levels of job stress are associated with lower levels of work–life balance among married female teachers. The Job Demands–Resources model explains that excessive job demands may deplete employees' physical and

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psychological resources, thereby reducing their capacity to maintain balance across life domains (Lesener, Gusy, & Wolter, 2019). Job stress occurs when job demands exceed an individual's ability to cope with those demands (Sofiah & Kurniawan, 2019). Excessive workloads, time pressure, role ambiguity, and administrative responsibilities may become sources of stress that negatively affect an individual's well-being (Naz, Ahmad, & Batool, 2021). For married female teachers, occupational demands are often accompanied by family responsibilities, creating additional pressures that may intensify stress levels. When teachers experience prolonged job stress, they may have fewer psychological and physical resources available to fulfill family obligations. As a result, conflicts between work and personal life become more likely to occur (Putri, Suroso, & Rista, 2024). This condition may reduce satisfaction in both domains and ultimately impair work–life balance. The present findings are supported by previous research indicating that employees who experience high levels of stress often report difficulties in allocating time and energy between work and family responsibilities. Persistent stress may also contribute to emotional fatigue, reduced job satisfaction, and decreased overall well-being, all of which can hinder the achievement of work–life balance (Yurista, Bakar, & Mirza, 2017).

Descriptive findings further revealed that most respondents reported moderate levels of work–life balance, emotional intelligence, and job stress. These results suggest that although respondents generally possess adequate emotional competencies, they still encounter challenges in balancing their professional and personal responsibilities (Nurhabiba, 2020). Likewise, the moderate level of job stress observed in this study indicates that work-related pressures remain a common experience among married female teachers and may influence their ability to maintain balance across life domains (Pangestu & Ardiana, 2024). Overall, the findings highlight the importance of strengthening emotional intelligence while simultaneously reducing job stress to promote better work–life balance among married female elementary school teachers. Schools and educational institutions may support teachers by providing emotional intelligence training, stress management programs, and organizational policies that foster a healthier

balance between professional responsibilities and family life. Such efforts may contribute to improved well-being, job performance, and quality of life among teachers (Zakaria, Ismail, Hendratni, Putrianti, Soeprapto, & Lubis, 2025).

CONCLUSION

Emotional intelligence and job stress were jointly associated with work–life balance among married female elementary school teachers. Higher emotional intelligence was associated with better work–life balance, whereas higher job stress was associated with poorer work–life balance. The model explained 84.4% of the variance; however, this unusually high value should be interpreted cautiously because the study used self-report measures and a cross-sectional convenience sample. Further research should replicate these findings using broader samples and longitudinal designs.

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